

## OBITUARY.

### JOHN URQUHART, M.D., M.R.C.S.ENG.

WITH sincere regret we have to record the death of Dr. John Urquhart, at his residence, 250, Union Street, Aberdeen. He has passed away at the age of 66 years, after a long illness. Some three years ago, while a member of a deputation which went on the search for a minister to the Free South Church, he caught a chill. This was the beginning of his illness. Bright's disease developed, and for more than a year he has been confined to his room. Occasionally he was able to see old friends and leave his bed for a few hours. On October 27th his disease rapidly took a dangerous turn, and he died in a few hours.

After completing his course at King's and Marischal Colleges, Aberdeen, Dr. Urquhart proceeded to Edinburgh, where he graduated M.D., afterwards taking the diploma of M.R.C.S. For a short time he practised in Yorkshire, but soon proceeded to India. He resided in Madras, where he soon took a leading place in his profession.

In addition to holding the post of Coroner of Madras, he held the offices of Professor of Medical Jurisprudence and Lecturer in Medicine. His private practice was also large. After spending twenty-two years in India, Dr. Urquhart returned to his native city, and speedily won his way to an extensive practice. In addition to his professional skill he was dowered with the kindest and sincerest of dispositions, and by his patients, his medical brethren, as well as by all who knew him, he was valued as a man of ripe judgment and ready sympathy. Transparent and unselfish in all his ways, it would have been singular if he could have made anything but friends. For many years he was a manager of the Royal Infirmary and Lunatic Asylum, and also of the Aberdeen Dispensary. He was an active member of the Aberdeen Medico-Chirurgical Society, being at one time President, and a frequent contributor to its *Transactions*, and also to the local Branch of the British Medical Association. He was fond of music, and took a keen interest in all the local musical societies. He was an ardent temperance man, and gave his time and his money to many philanthropic movements. By his loss the medical profession in Aberdeen is the poorer in one who was intelligent, conscientious, and devoted to duty, and who through all his ways carried the white flower of a blameless life.

A large and representative gathering of the public and the medical profession followed his remains to St. Nicholas Churchyard.

### JEAN ANTOINE VILLEMIN.

PROFESSOR VILLEMIN, who died in Paris on October 6th after a long and painful illness, was one of the most distinguished of modern pathologists owing to the important light which he threw on the true nature of tuberculosis. As has been well said, Laënnec discovered the unity, Villemin the inoculability, and Koch the parasite of tuberculosis. Owing to the prevalence of views as to the non-specificity of tuberculosis for many years, the excellence and accuracy of Villemin's work never received full recognition, until the crowning discovery of Koch took the world by storm, and revealed Villemin in his true place.

Villemin was born on January 25th, 1827, at Prey in the Vosges. He studied at the Faculty of Medicine of Strassburg, where he was a pupil of Schuetzenberger. He entered the military department of the French Army in 1848, and subsequently held for several years the post of tutor in the military medical school of Strassburg. In 1853 he obtained the degree of M.D., and not long afterwards left Strassburg to become Professeur Agrégé at Val-de-Grâce. At a later date he became Professor, and retired eventually from the service with the rank of Medical Inspector General. He was elected a titular member of the Academy of Medicine in the Section of Pathology in 1874, and at the time of his death was Vice-President of the Academy.

His earliest published work has to do with the subject with which his name is identified. It was an essay published in Paris and Strassburg in 1861, on the seat, evolution, and nature of tubercle, but it appears to contain no germ of his future discovery. It was in 1865, at the meeting of the Académie de

Médecine, that he read his first paper, in which he distinctly advanced the doctrine of the specificity of tubercle. The conclusions of this paper, stated in his own words, are: "Tuberculosis is a specific affection. Its cause is an inoculable agent. Inoculation can be made from it into the rabbit. Tuberculosis belongs to the class of virulent diseases and should be placed in nosological order near syphilis, but nearer to glanders." His subsequent writings could but bring fresh proofs in support of this brilliant generalisation, which had been attained at the cost of comparatively few experiments on animals and with apparatus and appliances of the most imperfect kind. Villemin's paper created a great sensation and was very hotly discussed and criticised. Villemin stood manfully to his thesis, and in 1868 he published his *Etudes sur la Tuberculose*, in which he undertook to prove by reasoning and experiment that it was a specific inoculable disease. His doctrine was not readily accepted either in France or abroad, and, as has been said, for many years was altogether rejected by the fashionable pathology of that day. In time, however, the fundamental truth and importance of his work came to be recognised, and Cohnheim was found to write of his discovery that it was one "from which, if I am not mistaken, will date in the history of tuberculosis, not only an incomparable advance, but also a complete transformation of our mode of regarding the disease."

Villemin's contributions to science were not confined to his pathological studies of tuberculosis. He published a number of papers on other subjects, the most important being devoted to the subject of scurvy. In earlier days he had collaborated with Professor Morel, of Strassburg, in the production of a treatise on human anatomy normal and pathological, which was accompanied by an atlas of original drawings, many of which were drawn from nature by Villemin himself.

### EMILE LÉON POINCARÉ, M.D.,

Professor of Hygiene in the Medical Faculty of Nancy.

PROFESSOR POINCARÉ, of Nancy, who passed away not long ago, was born in that town in 1828. He began his medical studies in his native town, and after spending two years in the Military Hospital at Metz, went to Paris where he graduated Doctor of Medicine in 1852, the subject of his thesis being "Ophthalmia Neonatorum." On his return to Nancy he became connected with the Medical School of that place, and in 1858 he was appointed Joint Lecturer on Anatomy and Physiology. When the Strassburg Faculty of Medicine was transferred to Nancy in 1872, Poincaré was appointed Joint Professor of Physiology. In 1874 he began to lecture on hygiene, and when a Chair of Hygiene was established in 1879, he was invited to be its first occupant. This post he continued to hold till his death.

Poincaré was an indefatigable worker, and in spite of the demands on his energies entailed by a large practice, he never allowed anything to interfere with the efficient discharge of his duties as a teacher. In addition to this he found time to contribute largely to medical literature. Besides numerous papers on the pathology of general paralysis, the structure and functions of the thyroid gland, diabetes, etc., he published in 1874-76 a work in three volumes on the *Normal and Pathological Anatomy of the Nervous System*. His later literary and scientific life was given chiefly to hygiene; to this period belong two important works, *Prophylaxis and Medical Geography of the Principal Diseases within the Province of Hygiene* and a *Treatise on Industrial Hygiene*.

Professor Poincaré was a corresponding member of the Académie de Médecine. His obsequies were attended by all the members of the Nancy professional body in their academic robes; funeral orations were delivered by Professor Bernheim, Dr. Benoit, and Dr. Vallois.

THE PROHIBITION OF THE IMPORTATION OF RAGS.—We understand that in consequence of numerous applications from commercial centres, pressing the desirability of some relaxation of the orders at present in force prohibiting the introduction of rags into England from certain countries of Europe, the Local Government Board have instituted inquiry into the subject, with the special object of learning what classes of goods, if any, now falling under the general heading of "Rags," it may be desirable and practicable to exclude from the operations of the orders.